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NEW CLOTHES FOR OLD

Broadcast by Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, in the Department of Agriculture's portion of the National Farm and Home Hour, Wednesday, March 3, 1943, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

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WALLACE KADDERLY: Here we are in Washington. And here is Ruth Van Deman to talk about clothes. It's an old saying that clothes makes the man. But Ruth will tell us that nowadays it's the women who are making and remaking the clothes.

RUTH VAN DEMAN: That's right, Wallace. And it's my guess that this spring a lot of good fashion news is going to come right out of the attic--or wherever it is that the family's discarded clothes are put away. Some of those old clothes have good material in them--better wool, for instance, than you may be able to buy these days. Many of these clothes are just out of style--but there's nothing wrong with them a smart seamstress can't cure.

You know, I didn't realize just how much could be done with old clothes until I went to a Victory Style Review the other day. This style review was sort of a wartime fashion show held down at the Department of Agriculture.

At this dress review I saw women in smart tailored suits made from their husbands' cast-off suits. I saw children in clothing of material twice as old as they were themselves. In fact, I saw one 12-year-old girl in a plaid skirt made from a piece of material brought from Scotland over 75 years ago.

I saw a coat that had been an out-of-style, size 40, appear as a size 14--very much up-to-date in style and cut, and with a brand new lining. I saw a winter playsuit made from two discarded coats. I saw a dress made from a large all-silk scarf. I saw little boys in suits made over from dad's old clothes and little girls in dresses made over from mom's old dresses.

Perhaps you'll get a better idea of this style show if I describe to you one pair of models--a mother and her little girl. The mother had on a softly tailored bluish gray suit with pleated skirt. She had on a white blouse and a smart felt hat. Little Barbara, her daughter, had on a trim, double-breasted oxford gray coat. They looked just like any well-dressed mother and daughter.

But here was the history behind those garments. Mother's suit had once belonged to Barbara's father. She had made it over for herself after he had been wearing it seven years. For the blouse she had cut down one of his discarded shirts--added a little simple embroidery. And to spruce up her own three-year-old felt hat she had worked magic with 12 cents worth of new ribbon.

Barbara's double-breasted gray coat was exactly twice as old as she was. She was five. Her coat had been her father's new coat ten years before. Barbara's mother had ripped up the old coat, turned the material, and remade it--using even the original lining.

This Victory Fashion Review was presented by the Department of Agriculture Clothes Clinic. This clinic is made up of about thirty wives of Department of Agriculture workers. They hold regular meetings to stitch...mend...remodel...and remake--and,

incidentally, save themselves money to buy war-saving stamps. It's an idea any group of smart women can duplicate. The clinic showed some of its own work at the Victory Fashion Review. In addition, there were garments made by students of the University of Maryland...Maryland 4-H Club members...and women cooperating with Home Demonstration Agents in Maryland.

There were also model garments made in the home economics laboratories of the Department. Incidentally, it was from the clothing specialists that members of the Clothes Clinic got many of their ideas.

They found one of our Home Economics bulletins especially helpful. Its title--- is: "Make-overs from Men's Suits."

I've mentioned this bulletin before---but if you didn't send for it last December, perhaps you'd like it for this spring.

To get a copy of "Make-overs from Men's Suits," address your card to Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Once again the title of this free bulletin--"Make-overs from Men's Suits."

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